

STRANGE CITIZENS OF THE CITY

a third-party work
by philip reed

Compatible with

**MIDNIGHT
BORG**

Roll 2D6 and Meet a Stranger

Günter Buckler, Back-Alley Merchant

Though there are many places to purchase supplies when visiting the city, some explorers prefer to operate in the shadows and avoid the prying eyes of many who spend far, far too much of their time gossiping and sharing secrets that are best left unsaid. For those characters who wish to exist outside of society's watchful gaze, Günter Buckler offers access to weapons, adventuring gear, and other items of commerce that may prove beneficial when exploring some dungeon or other.

Buckler has no shop, and no inventory, but that doesn't stop him from operating a successful venture that keeps him fed and semi-safely housed in a ramshackle hut in one of the city's numerous alleyways. Those first meeting Buckler are surprised by the man's bizarre visage; a magical accident several years ago horribly disfigured and transformed the man into the grotesque monster that he is today. If pressed, Buckler will admit that he was once a man. He declines to speak of the incident that forever changed him and, if pressed, will storm off as Buckler "refuses to deal with the rudeness" of the player characters.

When an *order* is placed, Buckler arranges a time and place for the delivery of the requested goods. Simple, common adventuring gear will require the man 2d6 hours to acquire, while weapons and armor of any sort will take 6d6 hours to seek out. There are rumors that Buckler murders to find the wares that he sells. That said, none have been foolish enough to ask the man for information on his manner of procuring the items that he happily sells for one-half the usual price.

At times, Buckler finds that he has more business than he can handle on his own. Perhaps he approaches the player characters one evening, offering to pay them each a few silver if they will find an item or two for him. "I care not how you acquire the object," the man tells them, refusing to discuss the dirty deeds that may be necessary to collect the goods that he is seeking. If the player characters deliver the requested items in the time allotted, Buckler thanks them for their service and asks that they seek him out if they are ever in need of more work.

Buckler is wanted by the city authorities and is a known criminal.

The reaction stat is used when meeting a character; see the official rules for the reaction table.

Reaction +3



We all know that he is a murderer, right? After all, where did you think he found his wares?

For as strange as he looks, Günter rarely attracts attention because he sticks to the shadows of the alleyways and prefers to come out only after the sun has set. In the rare times when called during the daylight hours, he refuses to step out into the more-traveled streets of the city.

As to the thing on his back, it is best not to ask.

HP 9 Morale 8
Heavy leather robes -d2
Clawed fingers d3
Special: 1d4 Hired Goons
(See p. 24.)

Captured 20s
Dead 2s

Reaction –

Captured 75s
Dead, Organic Bits 1s
Dead, Mechanical Parts 25s



His mind is so warped and abused that Snick Sneek cannot decide if he is still human . . . or if he is now a terrible monster.

Snick Sneek, Once-Human and Now Not

After several dozen encounters with death – each instance of which was reversed by the cruel machinations of Roland Repnik (see 2d6 result 6) – the thing now known as Snick Sneek is no longer recognizable to those who knew him before his undeath. More mechanical construct than living being, Snick Sneek is considered an abomination and monster by the city officials and is forced to exist in the dark underworld. He stays as far from the eyes of the common people as possible.

Though it is illegal to employ the unthinkable abominations that scurry in the shadows of the city, there are those who appreciate Snick Sneek's brutal, murderous approach to battle and happily pay the *man* to serve as a guard, assassin, or enforcer if only for a limited time.

Snick Sneek has made a home for himself in the city's sewers, erecting a makeshift hiding place from refuse and scraps of discarded lumber. Though he has no need for sleep, Sneek will sometimes hole up in his home and cry himself into a dazed stupor for days at a time. Unfortunately for the *man* that still exists somewhere within the monstrous shell that is now Snick Sneek, he can remember the time before the transformation and misses the companionship that was available before he was turned into the monster that he is today.

Though it is unlikely that the player characters would ever hire Snick Sneek – surely, they are smart enough to avoid upsetting those who follow the orders of the arch-priestess, yes? – they may find themselves in battle with the thing if they stumble across whatever illegal activity he is involved in at the time.

The monster is lonely and any act of kindness will shock and frighten him. It has been so long since anyone has treated Snick Sneek as anything more than an instrument of destruction that it is possible that he no longer knows how to respond to acts of friendship. There's only one way to find out . . .

HP 11 Morale 7
Unnatural carapace -2d3
Snicking Claw d8

Special: Inhuman Appearance (When first encountered, succeed at a Presence Test DR10 or curl up into a ball and cry for 2d3 rounds), doesn't eat or sleep, fast strike (attacks twice each round.)

Dinko and Bruno, Disciples of Skullheart

These two – each clothed in heavy robes and hiding behind bizarre masks – wander the streets of the city proclaiming their undying love for the dead god known as Skullheart. Those who know the many, varied histories of the world and its near-infinite parallel timelines say that Skullheart – in other times – caused the destruction of the world. It is said that it was only his death in this particular universe that has allowed the world to survive . . . so far.

Dinko and Bruno, fortunately, have no true power (yet!) and are merely crazed zealots who have made more enemies than they have allies. The two have swayed a few dozen citizens to the cause. Dinko and Bruno have built enough of a following that their meals and homes are paid for by the converted. Their goal is to amass a thousand followers, at which point they hope to have saved enough silver to construct a temple in Skullheart's name and dedicated to the dead god.

What motivates these two? They found a copy of *The Teachings of Zebakan Blax* several years ago, a guide to reviving the dead god and bringing his evil back to life. Every action they take is one outlined in the book, and the two will not rest until Skullheart has returned, or they are both dead.

To date, their efforts have been laughed at by the city officials who believe that Dinko and Bruno are nothing more than charlatans out to rob the stupid. Imagine the surprise on the faces of those same officials if the two are able to build that temple, which will no doubt be instrumental to gaining even more followers.

Will the player characters join the cause, or will they foresee the oncoming disaster?

HP 10 Morale 6
Unholy Robes -d2
Unholy Blade d6

Their unholy gear crumbles to dust if the two are killed, leaving behind only their gaunt, pale, diseased bodies and the staff. Killing one kills them both.

Special: Twins (Beneath their masks and heavy robes, Ninko and Bruno are identical twins who are connected by unholy power; the two share a hit point pool and are treated as a single entity at all times.) 2d3 Hired Goons (See p. 24.)

Reaction –



Captured 20s Dead 1s

Unholy Staff 50s • If killed, the staff (and their bodies) remains behind. It is a profane object of unimaginable power . . . that the player characters will never unlock.

HP 15 Morale 8
Arcanomechanical Suit* -d4+1
Crossbow d8, Dagger d4

Special: Violent Personality
(Bernhard is excessively violent and gains +2 to damage when angered.)

Arcanomechanical Suit 65s
Corpse, minus suit 5s

* The suit is valuable to those who tinker, craft, and make strange contraptions. The city officials will also pay; maybe they can learn something by studying the suit.



Reaction -3

Bernhard Kristoffersen, Brutal Huntsman

One of those poor souls “saved” by the evil work of Roland Repnik (see 2d6 result 6), Bernhard is forever encased in the arcanomechanical suit that holds his shattered organic bits in place. If you were to undo the straps, unfasten the bolts, and try to look beneath the leather and metal shell that surrounds the man, you would soon find that all that remains of a once-great huntsman is the torso and most of the head; everything else is engineered and powered by infernal sorcery.

Before his rebirth, when he was still a complete man, Bernhard was a huntsman, one of the city guards. As a guard, he patrolled the forest and roads near the city and inflicted pain on those criminals who dared to question the authority of the city’s officials. Bernhard led a squad of six men, and was respected by those in power. He was feared by those who rely on theft and murder to survive within the city’s walls.

Though he was a cruel man, Bernhard was a believer in the law and would do anything within his power to inflict his own brand of justice – often torture followed by execution – on anyone who broke the city’s laws. A number of rumors regarding Repnik’s questionable laboratory found their way to the huntsman’s ear and when investigating the stories, Bernhard was shocked to find that the rumors were true. The respected priest truly was a madman experimenting on the city’s people.

Bernhard made the mistake of thinking that none were above the city’s laws and moved to arrest the priest. Unsurprisingly, Repnik was ready for the huntsman and Bernhard was slaughtered by his own men; the priest’s power so great that even the city guard were willing to obey him over their trusted friend and commander.

Rather than toss what was left of Bernhard after the slaughter, Repnik used the remains in an experiment that proved most successful. Bernhard’s mind was erased and he was ensorcelled, bound by magic to follow Repnik’s every command. The priest’s only command? Go out into the city and inflict pain on any who break the city’s laws.

What remains of Bernhard is now a soulless monster who wanders aimlessly through the city, immune from the actions of the guard (who are under orders to “not see” the creature) so long as he continues killing any who he witnesses committing a crime.

Reaction - 1

Roland Repnik, Priest and Inventor

Few people show their wickedness as plainly on their corporeal form as Roland Repnik, the evil priest and cruel inventor who has made the city his personal plaything. By taking advantage of his immense wealth and his position as a respected priest, Repnik has been able to indulge his dark desires and has a stranglehold on the city authorities than cannot be broken. Blackmail, torture, and bribes (fueled by donations to the cathedral) keep the man in a position of power.

Repnik preaches once each week at the city's largest cathedral. He promises his followers that evil has invaded the streets and alleys, and that it is only their donations to the cause that keeps the demonic forces of hell from overwhelming the city and murdering everyone who lives within the walls. Hundreds of worshipers pack the cathedral every day, though many know not exactly which god they are praying to, their trust in Repnik so complete that they merely repeat his chants. These evil chants are even now summoning the End of Days and ushering in the darkness that will soon consume the world and bring an end to all life.

As if Repnik's deception in luring others to donate silver to fund his evil ways wasn't bad enough, he uses a not-insignificant portion of the ill-gotten coin to finance his experiments in body manipulation. Fusing metal, wood, leather, and inhuman matter to his captured subjects through sorcery, Repnik takes those who are already broken and shatters them completely, transforming them into foul beasts with almost no humanity or soul remaining once the evil inventor has completed his work. Many of these experiments are discarded once the work is done, the dead being collected and eaten by the city cannibals, while those who survive do their best to accept their new state and continue on with what little life they still have within them.

Unlike many of those strangers that the player characters may encounter on the streets, taking action against Repnik is a suicidal course of action that is most likely to end with their deaths or, at the very least, forcing them to flee the city. Repnik has so much power and influence that if he fingers someone as a murderer, thief, or ne'er-do-well or any sort, the city automatically issues a bounty for the capture of that unlucky miscreant.

Still, there comes a time when evil must be confronted, regardless of the consequences.

HP 10 Morale 10
Layers of Blubber -d2
Fists d2

Special: Persuasive Speech* (If he speaks, all within hearing range must succeed a Presence D14 Test or fall under his influence.) 2d4 Hired Goons (See p. 24.)

*Those who fall under the spell of Repnik's calm, hypnotizing speech will consider the man a friend, so long as he does not ask them to take action that will inflict self-harm or wound their friends. The effect wears off after 4d6 rounds.



No reward

Reaction –

Doktor Marcussen,
The Unexpected Healer

Marcussen hung his shingle years ago, marking himself as a healer-for-hire and welcoming the injured and ill into his home at any time of day. Marcussen will accept anyone at any hour, though what he charges for his services will depend entirely on his initial reaction* to the patient.

Using secretive magical healing powers and potions, Marcussen will heal 1d3+1 hit points (once he is paid) or remove almost any illness after 5d12 minutes of care. Paying him more than he asks will decrease the time needed for healing by 1 minute for every silver handed over above his stated fee (to a minimum of five minutes).

The doktor is fully encased in a suit of leather bandages and his faces – the man has two heads, though it doesn't seem to bother his patients – are hidden behind similar scraps of leather and cloth. Neither face does more than blink at the patients; all talking comes from the bizarre mask that the man holds in his hands. When treating a patient, Marcussen sets the mask close by and even separated from the body, the mask continues to handle the entirety of the conversation.

When not encountered at his home and place of business, Marcussen is usually at one of the city's many taverns. The man has a gambling problem and is often in debt to many of the loan sharks, gangsters, and swindlers who operate card and dice games throughout the city. So far, it has only been his skills that has kept him from swinging from a noose; Marcussen often repays his gambling debts with his healing.

The player characters may meet Marcussen either at his home – if they are wounded and in need of immediate healing – or at a tavern. The gamemaster is encouraged to play up the man's need for bribes; the more silver he is given/promised, the friendlier he becomes.

* Make a reaction roll using the official rules. Bribing the man with silver before he even asks for payment will adjust the result (+1 to the reaction roll for every 3s offered).

Reaction Result: Kill! 50s, Angered 30s, Indifferent 15s,
Almost Friendly 8s, Helpful 2s

HP 10 Morale 7

Bandaged torso -d2

Bite d2

Special: Acidic spittle. Test Agility DR12 or be splattered with the spittle. Lose the next turn to wiping it off or suffer 1 point of damage.

No reward

Ivana Novomedska, Seller of Scrolls

HP 8 Morale 10
Wicker Armor -d2
Fists d2

Special: Mimic Scrolls. (Once every other round, Ivana may duplicate and use the power of any one random scroll carried by one of the PCs.)

If you are in need of scrolls, seek out Ivana's small hut on the outskirts of the city. She always has them for sale.

Though she may seem a little strange, there is no better source of scrolls in the city than this elderly woman who makes a living hunting out and purchasing arcane documents from others. If you have scrolls to sell, she will pay $4d8+1$ silver (adjusted upward, as the GM feels is appropriate) and if you wish to purchase scrolls, she always has several in her shop. If you encounter her outside of her shop, she'll have fewer scrolls on her person (see the facing page).

Ivana is far more intelligent than many you will meet in the city, possessing an understanding and awareness of the greater cosmos that is almost unmatched anywhere in the known world. In addition to buying and selling scrolls, Ivana also sells information; it is the gamemaster's call as to what exact knowledge she possesses . . . as well as what she charges to divulge that treasured knowledge with others.

Ivana should be used as a source of arcane power and information and not as a punching bag.

Scrolls All depends on who you can sell them to. She has 2d3 scrolls at any time.

No reward

Reaction +1



HP 6 Morale 6
Profane Armor -d3
Staff d4, Fists d2

Special: Desperate (A PC attacked by Notario must re-roll any Defense test that succeeds; use the second roll.)

Profane Armor* 40s
Staff 5s

Stale Bread 1s
Captured 20s



*Captured when wearing the Profane Armor
This suit of leather armor is decorated with evil, blasphemous symbols. Wearing the armor in the city is illegal; anyone caught wearing this suit may be put to death by the authorities.

Reaction – Razil Notario, Wretched Survivor

Once, long ago, before the discovery, Razil Notario was like many others in the city. He wished for nothing more than a safe and healthy life for himself and his family, and he worked hard to put food on the table and keep the roof over his family's heads. He was successful at these simple goals . . . for a time.

Notario made his living as a ratcatcher and sewer worker, employed by the city officials to keep the sewers clear and free of vermin of all types. Though he was never properly trained as a warrior, the man spent enough of his hours engaged in battle with the things that frequent the sewers beneath the city that he could hold his own in a fight. And no matter the stresses and dangers of the day, every night he was enveloped in the warmth and love of his family in their home. Life was perfect for the man.

Everything changed the day that Notario found the armor. It was a day like any other, a day in the sewers, when he found the body of a man encased in a strange suit of armor unlike any he had seen before. Most of the body was missing, consumed by the many vermin, insects, and beasts that roam the sewers, and Notario thought that for as odd as the suit looked, it might be useful in his work. Stripping the armor from the corpse, he took it home to clean it up and try it on. That was a mistake.

After scrubbing the flesh and blood from the suit and cleaning it, and when fastening the last of the buckles and straps into place, Notario was consumed by a feeling of despair and terror unlike any he had encountered before. Something about the suit filled him with dread, but before he could remove the strange armor he blacked out. When the man came to, he was standing in his home with a knife in his hand and his family dead at the hands of the suit. At his hands. Whatever evil possessed him was there to stay, sealing him within the suit and controlling his every desire.

Over time, Notario learned to control the suit's power over him, stealing precious moments of clarity from an otherwise clouded life. For a few hours every day, Notario is in command of his body and tries to remove the suit, sometimes going so far as trying to hack off his own limbs. For the rest of the time, though, the suit controls him and orders him to murder others. He dwells in the sewers now, a wanted criminal who no longer wishes to live.

Reaction -2

Tapio Eskola, Reconstructed Warrior

His life as he exists today started eleven months ago, when the violence of war shattered his body and left him bleeding on the battlefield with no hope of surviving through the cold night. At least, if he had been lucky, Tapio would have been dead before the dawn.

Men in the employ of Roland Repnik (see 2d6 result 6) scoured the battlefield, searching for both equipment that they could resell and corpses that Repnik could use in his infernal workshop. When they came across the lifeless, still form of Tapio, the scavengers thought they had struck gold; though the legs were nowhere to be seen, the man's overly-muscled torso and arms were in perfect condition. Repnik would be certain to pay a handsome bonus for such a fine specimen. When Tapio coughed, the servants of evil dropped everything and rushed the dying man to their employer.

Repnik constructed Tapio a new body, forever binding the man's remaining organic bits to an infernal-fired suit that sucked arcane power direct from the hells themselves. Weeks were spent cutting, stitching, hammering, and experimenting with Tapio's body and the suit. Throughout it all, the warrior was kept alive through healing potions and scrolls, despite how many times he begged Repnik to end his life and free him from the constant agony of the procedure.

Although the dark priest usually dumped his experiments on the streets once he was finished entertaining himself, something about Tapio made the soulless priest wish to own Tapio as a bodyguard and slave. Unfortunately for Repnik, Tapio's anger and desire for freedom proved too strong for the priest's magic; ultimately, the warrior escaped from Repnik's foul laboratory and returned to society where he was shunned by most. It was only Repnik's cruelty that allowed Tapio to remain "free," the priest has issued orders to his followers and the city to leave the warrior alone.

Now, Tapio works as a guard and enforcer, selling his skills and warhammer to those who will pay his fee. Tapio knows that Repnik is watching him, and it is only a matter of time until the warrior grows comfortable enough in his new body to seek out the priest and exact vengeance for the way in which that evil man mistreated Tapio and prevented the warrior from ascending to the heavens.

HP 16 Morale –
Reconstructed Body -d8
Hammer d8, Fists d4

Special: Trample (If there is more than 10' between Tapio and an opponent, the warrior charges which is at DR10 and d12 damage)



**Reconstructed
Body* 65s**
Captured 10s



HP 11 Morale 9
Mystic Armor* -d3
Magick Bolts d4**

Special:
Sorcerer (In addition to his mystic armor and magick bolts, Millan also has 1d3+1 scrolls and may use Powers 4 times every day)

* This is a magical aura that is always active and cannot be removed.

** These appear as blue darts of energy that spring from his outstretched hands.

Reaction – Millan Cales, The Faceless Sorcerer

Wearing tattered robes and a blood-stained cloak, Millan Cales looks like your run-of-the-mill wizard and is surprisingly difficult to describe in any detail. The man has a near-featureless, bland face that is indescribable because of the magic spell that obscures and distorts his true face. The spell is endless and cannot be dispelled, meaning that none – even Cales at this point – know what the man really looks like. A powerful asset for someone who is willing to commit crimes as heinous and terrible as murder if it gets them one step closer to their goals. (And yes, Cales is willing to kill to get what he wants.)

Cales lives beneath one of the many guard towers that ring the city center, using the space that was hollowed out to house supplies for the guardsmen as his home. He rightfully purchased the one-room cellar space a few years ago and is quick with his official deed whenever anyone tries to call him squatter. The tower is still in use, with 1d3+1 guards atop the battlements most days and nights.

Though Cales spends many of his nights stalking the city in search of victims – the man must consume the blood of an innocent once every few days to sustain his magical powers – he isn't seen as a criminal and murderer because he hides his actions so very well. At times, Cales lures an unsuspecting stranger to his home, pointing out that city guards are well within hearing and that there is no risk of joining him for a drink and a pleasant evening of conversation. Of course, those same strangers do not leave the man's home alive.

In addition to his unquenchable thirst for blood, Cales also requires a steady supply of bat wings, insect heads, ground bone, and other material components that he uses in his magical study. Rather than hunt out the supplies himself, Cales will sometimes approach adventurers at a tavern or inn and make them an offer of silver in exchange for whichever item or two he needs at the time. For this reason, some within the city see the man as a benefactor and source of revenue. Perhaps the player characters will be fortunate enough to make the man's acquaintance?

Still Warm Corpse 100s • Though he is not wanted by the authorities, there are many practitioners of the magical arts who would gladly pay for his corpse so that they could study it.

Ivan Ravelo, Alien Scavenger

Beneath the wide-brimmed hat and behind the bizarre series of tubes that mask his face, Ivan Ravelo is a stranger unlike any other on this world. A citizen of the city for several decades now, Ravelo was born under a different star on a world somewhere beyond the universe. Though he is unwilling to speak of his past, and does all that he can to keep his true self hidden from others, Ravelo is a known and respected member of the community who spends his days seeking out scraps, garbage, and junk that may be recycled and used again.

Ravelo's mask is a mystic artifact that is all that remains of the possessions he carried through the interstellar portal many decades ago. The mask is connected to an object that keeps him alive; the alien cannot breathe the air of this world and the artifact constantly reworks the oxygen around him and transforms it into a thick, heavy substance that sustains his life. If someone else were to try and breathe this arcane mixture, they would likely die; it is a poisonous cloud that inflicts 4d4 damage if it is inhaled.

The alien owns a hovel a few miles outside of the city that has, as he has collected junk, become something of a scrapyard and shop. Ravelo goes into the city almost every day of the week to find what he can to take back to his home where he repairs objects, constructs new items, and makes what living he can scrape together from the accumulated trash of others.

If the player characters need something, or need an item repaired, they can visit Ravelo's scrapyard and pay the alien for his services . . . or trade, which Ravelo is always hoping for since he enjoys bartering with others. He charges roughly 2s per hour for his work and most simple tasks require d3 hours to complete. The gamemaster will determine the time required for more complicated repair and construction projects.

Ravelo is friendly and generous, almost always ready to help someone in need. So long as he is treated with equal kindness and openness, he will do his best to help anyone regardless of their appearance, affiliation, or past. Ravelo's only constant companion is his insectoid mount, Xxallbach, a long-lived creature from another realm that Ravelo has kept alive over the years with his tinkering skills. Xxallbach is more machine than insect and is connected to Ravelo by a psychic bond that cannot be broken.

Reaction +4

No reward

HP 8 Morale 6

No armor

Pointy stick d3

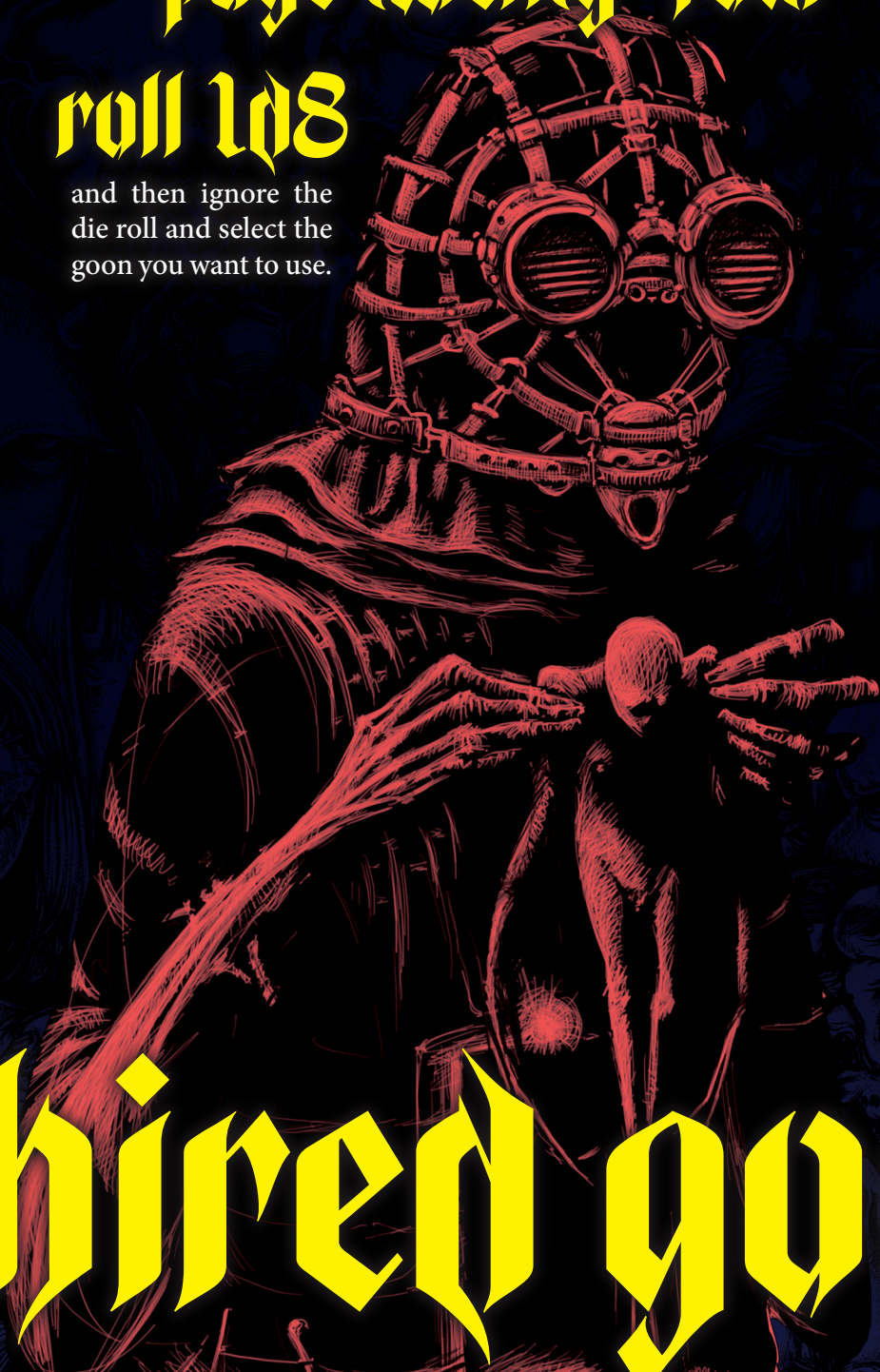
Special: Insectoid Mount (the odd creature is bound by psychic power and will obey every command and give its life to protect Ravelo. It is **HP 20, Morale -**, **Carapace -d8**, and **Skewering Limbs d6**.)



page twenty-four

roll 1d8

and then ignore the die roll and select the goon you want to use.



hired goons

page twenty-five

1

Stefan Tataru. HP 7 Morale 5 • Tattered Cloak -d2 • Knife d4
Special: Cowardly. At the start of each round, compare the number of characters on Stefan's side to the number of opponents. If Stefan's side has fewer combatants, there is a 1 in 4 chance that the man tries to run away from the fight this round. (And every round after until he is dead or escapes, there is a 1 in 4 chance that he stops running and returns to the fight. When running, he does not attack.)

A young lad of only thirteen, Stefan once had dreams of living his life as a strong, respected knight and champion of the people. Those foolish dreams were shattered by life on the street and now he only wishes to earn enough silver to survive. Perhaps he will find bravery . . . if he lives.

2

Magdaléna Boháčová. HP 8 Morale 5 • No Armor • Sharpened nails d3
Special: Cruel Heart. Magdaléna is particularly bloodthirsty and destructive, not one to shy away from a fight. Any attacks she makes after her opponent has been wounded, Magdaléna's vicious assault turns even more violent as the sight of blood empowers her. Increase damage to d4+1.

Though she may look gentle and lady-like, dressed in a fine gown as she is and with her hair kept neat and face hidden behind a sheer veil, Magdaléna is far more a cold-blooded killer than she is a social butterfly. She will fight to the death if her employer does not call her off.

To generate a random crowd, roll 1d3 times on pp. 2 to 23, 1d4 times on this particular table, and another 1d4 times on pp. 28 to 31. If you roll a duplicate result on any table, there are two of that particular character in the crowd. Which one is the doppelganger?

page twenty-six

3

Sis Ermengol. HP 9 Morale 8 • Scale Armor -d4 • Sword d6
Special: Overwhelming Greed. Sis is so desperate for silver that she has no true allegiance to anyone. If she is offered coins – even during a fight – there is a 2 in 4 chance that she will accept the proffered silver. It takes a perceptive character to detect this weakness; a successful DR16 Presence test does the job.

Sis is rather plain looking, if a little on the heavy side. She is unafraid of confrontation and has years of experience as a fighter. Her reputation as a turn-coat and silver-seeker precedes her; she is having tougher times finding work.

7

Berez Akam. HP 10 Morale 8 • Leather Armor -d2 • Spiked Club d6
Special: Hungry for Flesh. During a brutal winter, Berez was forced to strip the flesh from a dead friend and consume it in order to survive. He found he has a taste for long pig, and there is a 1 in 6 chance that when anyone is killed in battle that he will turn from the fight and start harvesting the meat from the felled combatant.

Berez is a dirty, disgusting man who rarely bathes. He has no friends, and those who are forced to work with him will abandon him if things go wrong during a fight.

5

Arnold Jespersen. HP 11 Morale 6 • Chainmail Armor -d4 • Sword d6
Special: Calculating Leader. Any characters with Jespersen benefit from his leadership skills. The man's ability to direct combatants makes them more effective; increase the damage of all characters working with him by +1.

Jespersen started out when he was very young, working with the older gangs in the city and spending most of his formative years murdering and stealing. He is known and respected throughout the city's criminal underworld and is wanted by city officials. Unlike other hired goons and thugs, there's a reward for capturing (15s) or killing (5s) the man.

page twenty-seven

6

Samuel Paasio. HP 8 Morale 6 • No Armor • Sword d6
Special: Spell-Touched. Several years ago, Paasio was the servant of a vile wizard who mistreated the man. The wizard would cast spell after spell on Paasio, using him for all manner of cruel magical experiments. There is a 1 in 10 chance that any scroll that comes within 5' of the man will be forever erased (check once for each scroll in any battle). The magic is absorbed into Paasio who heals 1 point whenever this happens.

Paasio is aware of his spell-touched power and has learned to turn it to his advantage. He rushes any casters and engages them in hand-to-hand combat.

4

Lodosis Abarca. HP 12 Morale 6 • Padded Armor -d2 • Flail d8
Special: Intimidating. Abarca is a tall, thick man. Those who face him in combat must make a successful DR12 Presence test or suffer a -2 penalty on all attack rolls during the fight.

He may be big and tough, but he is slow and dumb. Abarca is easily tricked and can be manipulated by many who recognize his lack of intelligence.

8

Adam Slavik. HP 10 Morale 5 • Burlap Sack -d2-1 (yes, you read that right, it's -d2-1) • Left arm of a zombie d3
Special: Toxic Aura. Adam gives off an evil aura that animals can automatically sense if they get within 10' of the man. All others must make a successful DR14 Presence test to detect this disturbing aura. Each round that someone stands within 10' of Adam, there is a 1 in 4 chance that the aura inflicts 1 point of damage and sickens the victim for 2d3 hours.

Adam was once an adventurer, a hero who raided the tombs and dungeons of the land in search of treasures. He opened the wrong chest, though, and was forever cursed. As soon as his companions figured out that sickness and pain followed Adam, he was banished from the party. He never works with others.

possibly harmless wanderers

Not everyone you meet in the city is special. Roll 2d6 when you are looking for an encounter with someone who might be more mundane (and far less interesting) than the strangers who are described earlier in this unusual booklet.

As with the other strangers detailed within this slim booklet, those characters that follow are yours to use as you see fit. Change the names. Change the descriptions. Change anything that you wish! Surely, your own imagination is far more twisted than mine, yes?

roll 2d6

1 2 1

Niene Meier. She's quite old, very wrinkled, and spends her early mornings baking meat pies that she sells on the city streets shortly after the sun rises. A single pie costs 1s and there are no choices; whatever pies she made that morning are the pies that she sells. There's a 1 in 4 chance every day that the pies are stuffed with rat meat. Anyone eating a rat pie must make a successful DR12 Toughness test or lose 1 hit point as the foul meat tears at their guts and sickens them for 2d4 hours.

1 3 1

Artijs Veiss. He walks with a limp, wears a stovepipe hat, and makes a living as an information broker. Veiss will listen to anyone and then decide whether or not the knowledge that they share is worth paying for. He pays 1d4s to roughly half of those who bring him information (rarely paying what the information is actually worth). Pay Veiss 5s and he will share a rumor with you (see **Rumors**, at right). If you choose to sell the man information, make a successful DR12 Presence test to earn a payout of 1d4s. If the test scores a Crit, Veiss pays 2d4s for the information.

rumors

roll 1d6

1. The smoke on the horizon is from the campfires of a goblin tribe that is passing near the city. The city officials are paying a 2s bounty on goblin ears (left ear) for so long as the smoke is visible.

2. The Tousled Cat is one of several taverns in the city where you can find cheap beer. Unfortunately, it is also one of several taverns in the city where the beer may be befouled and cause you to fall ill.

3. A body was fished out of the central well yesterday. Whatever you do, boil any water before you drink or bathe in it; you can never tell what diseases may be lurking in that tainted well.

4. Ivana the Scrollseller is paying 15s for any scrolls. The murderers and thugs in the city are keeping watch for easy marks to kill and rob for their scrolls. Watch yourselves.

5. Ratmen have infiltrated the city and are scurrying about the sewers as we speak. The city guard is paying 15s for every ratman corpse that is brought to them before dawn tomorrow. What are you waiting for? Get out there and earn some silver, fools!

6. Don't eat the butterflies that flit about the Sacred Park of Priede. They have been cursed by the Sun itself and any who swallow even a single one of those protected butterflies will die before the sun sets another day.

4

Velkan Gusa. Taller than many, towering a full head over most in the crowd, Gusa has a difficult time blending in no matter where he is. Gusa is a scrap merchant, specializing in cast-off goods. He pulls a small cart loaded with junk and there's a 1 in 8 chance that he'll have what you're looking for at prices competitive with other merchants in the city. *Gusa is an enemy of Günter Buckler and is trying to have the merchant killed. Gusa will pay 25s to anyone who murders Buckler before sunset.*

5

Jasmina Antonova. Late every night, Jasmina seeks out the drunks in the city and picks their pockets. Every morning, she peddles the stolen goods, discretely unloading everything to make enough silver to survive another day. *What does she have to sell? Roll 1d6: 1. A random scroll (23s), a small sack of tasty bugs (2s), a torch (1s), and a 10' length of chain (5s). 2. A turnip (1s), lantern oil (2s), a fine wooden carving of a demon (10s), and a human hand (3s). 3. Six nails (1s), a half-bottle of cheap wine (3s), a small holy book with missing pages (5s), and a dagger (6s). 4. A single hoop earring (2s), a stale biscuit (1s), and a raggedy blanket (2s). 5. A lantern (4s), a random scroll (30s), and a necklace of human teeth (3s). 6. A small sack of salt (1s), a rambling and incoherent treatise on the city sewers (1s), and a rusted sword that will break if it is used in battle (3s).*

6

Daran Cewher. Once, he was a warrior and champion, noble and proud. That is, until the day that he was beaten by the evil spirits and his sanity forever torn from his soul. *When encountered, make a successful DR14 Presence test or be overcome by the madness aura that envelopes him. On a failed test, you gibber and drool for 3d6 minutes before returning to your senses.*

7

Thegan Ledger. Using an infernal machine that was found in the deepest level of an unspoken dungeon, Ledger speaks his nightmares into one end of the machine and the other spits out copy after copy of parchment pamphlets that allow him to spread his nightmares across the city. *Anyone reading one of these works must make a successful DR10 Presence test or be overcome by an unnatural fear for 2d3 hours. (During which time, the afflicted soul suffers a -2 penalty on all tests.)*

8

Grgur Pap. A skilled marionettist who carves his foul puppets from sewage-soaked tree limbs that he fishes out of the city sewers. Pap puts on shows once each day and often attracts an audience of 5d6, many of whom toss coins as payment for the entertainment. *Watching one of his gruesome, violent puppet shows can be quite unsettling. Those who sit through an entire showing find they have no appetite for 1d4+1 hours.*

9

Sigurd Schmidt. Although few would ever guess by looking at him – Sigurd dresses in a fine suit and presents himself as a gentleman – this cannibal . . . well, I feel as if that one word tells the story. *Each time that he is encountered, there is a 1 in 8 chance that Sigurd is unable to resist his urge and becomes fixated on a random player character. There's just something about the character that looks so very appetizing that Sigurd follows the PC, waiting for the perfect time to strike . . . and feast.*

10

Andreas Michaliou. His pawn shop burned down a few weeks ago, leaving Andreas homeless and unsure of what to do next with his life. Everything he had was wrapped up in his business, and the fire that consumed the building and the many goods within took not only his belongings and home, but also his sense of motivation. Andreas now wanders the city streets, begging for scraps of food and trying to shake off the general malaise that has settled into his very bones. *When encountered on the street, Andreas asks the player characters for any food or silver that they can spare. If they show him any kindness at all, there's a 1 in 4 chance it snaps him out of his funk and reminds him that there are good people in this world. He will not forget the PCs' generous act.*

11

Bakos Gabor. His eyes bandaged with strips of heavy burlap, Gabor is surprisingly confident in his walk for one who is unable to see. The man carries a satchel of flowers and offers them to anyone he encounters, asking for only a single silver in exchange for the flower that is – to be entirely honest – remarkably fresh and beautiful. *If a player character purchases one of Gabor's flowers, that character gains a +1 bonus to all tests for 2d4 hours after which point the flower crumbles and turns to dust. If the man is followed, the player characters will eventually catch Gabor in the act of picking dying flowers from the skull of a decrepit old woman who sleeps in an alley behind a butcher's market. Somehow, the woman's "hair" is nothing but flowers of numerous colors. Gabor's touch brings life to the flowers that he picks, revitalizing them in seconds.*

12

Jasna Kristo. In her crumbling, collapsing cottage on the city's edge, Jasna spends her nights crafting rag dolls from scraps of fabric that she finds in the city's trash heaps. She then gives the dolls to children during the day. *Those who sleep with one of Jasna's rag dolls must make a successful DR12 Presence test each morning when they wake. On a failed test, the night was sleepless and the character suffers a -2 penalty on all tests until sunset.*

108 places in the city

When walking the streets of the city, you never know what will be around the next corner or down the nearest alley.

1

Harbold's Raceway. This large, open air arena sits as far from the center of the city as possible. Nestled up against the shore, the wooden and stone walls of the Raceway are in a state of disrepair, crumbling and collapsing. Decades ago, the complex was a training post and barracks for the city watch, but now it is under the control of Reginald Harbold who runs races daily. *If the PCs visit the Raceway, it will either be to bet on the races or seek employment; many wealthy citizens spend time here drinking and gambling. Perhaps one of the player characters is a skilled jockey out to earn a few silver riding in one of the races? The arena will allow almost anything to participate in the races, as demonstrated by Udo Kuusk's current mount (see facing page).*

2

The Twisted Tower of Vikor Snrubsake. This tall, thin structure stretches twelve stories into the sky and is constructed of stone, timber, and held together with arcane mortar and enchanted ropes. The tower is far too tall to stand naturally, and those wizards and mages who visit the place report a sense of unease as the sorcery that holds the tower together fills the air with a constant aura of dread. *Any PCs who possess magic powers staying in the tower will have a 1 in 3 chance of being so distracted by the place that they simply cannot sleep when within the tower's walls.*

3

Yesterday's Lost Wares. If there is a single owner of this odd shop, none in the city know their name. Attended by wooden golems, each only a few feet tall, shoppers at Yesterday's Lost Wares are followed closely the instant they enter the two-story pawn shop. Everything in Yesterday's Lost Wares is used, sometimes stolen, and the nameless golems are quite pushy when it comes to making deals. *Most items are available for sale in the shop, often at extremely low prices, and the golems are as likely to buy the PCs' gear as they are to sell them something. Anything purchased at Yesterday's Lost Wares has a 1 in 6 chance of breaking every time that it is used.*

You never know what you'll find on the track at Harbold's Raceway. One of the stranger mounts, pictured, is Udo Kuusk's six-legged biomechanical undead creature built by Roland Repnik (see 2d6 result 6). Though it may look bizarre, the thing is faster than you think.

Udo Kuusk is one of the track's celebrities, with dozens of wins under his belt. He's a favorite with Raceway regulars and not to be underestimated.





One of Doktor Marcussen's competitors (see 2d6 result 7), Doctor Diko Maras is a hypochondriac who takes every precaution against catching whatever illness is most on his mind that day. The man never leaves the safety of his rented room in anything less than the a full mask, heavy clothes, and an even heavier coat. The doctor is as likely to burn his clothing as he is to clean it. He is a fraud.

4

The Clinic of Diko Maras. Once a laundry, this medical clinic in the docks district is the property of Doctor Diko Maras, a man who is as unsuited to the life of a healer as anyone in the history of medicine. Maras is a fraud, with no professional experience in the field of medicine. The plague mask that he wears was found several years ago and while wearing it, those in the city assumed he was a doctor. Sensing an opportunity, Maras borrowed coin to buy the clinic and now spends his days "treating" those foolish enough to visit the trickster. *Anyone who asks Maras for aid will be charged 2d3 silver and has a 50/50 chance of actually getting sicker after the visit. Those doctors and healers who have met the man try to warn others that he is a charlatan, but Maras' low cost medical treatment keeps the man in business.*

5

The Statue of the Defeated Dragon. Near the main gates of the city stands this life-size and realistic dragon statue that, in bad light, can easily frighten those who mistake it for a real dragon. Created by the artist Szilveszter several decades ago, the statue was commissioned by a past official who thought that the people needed some art in their lives. Many considered it a waste of city funds and they cornered and murdered both the artist and the official responsible for the statue's creation. *These days, the statue is used as a meeting point for thieves: "Bring the goods to the shadow of the dragon at dawn."*

6


Gordana Suleska Book Bindery. Catering to the wealthier citizens of the city, the Lady Suleska runs this sweatshop with her son, Borko Suleska. The single-story old home on the outskirts of the city sits atop a deep cellar where Suleska's hirelings – mostly children – toil away printing and binding books. The shop possesses a mechanical press, no doubt stolen from another dimension, and Suleska keeps it running almost constantly. *A PC wizard or scholar in search of a blank journal may be directed to Suleska's Book Bindery, where the party will find all sorts of books, from hand-crafted masterpieces to mass-produced chap books and cheaply-made political tracts. Since many in the city are incapable of reading, the majority of the books on offer are packed with illustrations and very little text.*

7

Nechrubel's Observatory. This large sailing ship has been moored in the city harbor for several years now, docked for so long that the network of gang-planks and netting crossing from ship to shore makes the ship effectively a permanent addition to the pier. The ship's owner, Marco Gerstner, has been reluctant to return to sea since his last voyage (he lost his leg in an encounter with a serpent). These days, instead of transporting cargo and passengers, the man uses the ship as a makeshift school where he teaches the ways of sailors. *The party may come into contact with Gerstner in one of the taverns of the docks district. Still calling himself Captain Marco Gerstner, his frequent visits to the taverns are as much about drinking as they are seeking "students" for his failing school. Gerstner is running low on coin and it is only a matter of time before he cannot pay his dock fees and is forced to return to the open water.*

8

Nina Korsch's Bread Cart. Korsch can be seen most days pulling her small, two-wheeled cart down the city's busier streets, looking to sell her hard bread and biscuits to anyone with an appetite for bland, near-tasteless food. Many in the city who have tried her breads are unsure of how the woman can stay in business – her baked goods truly are nasty – but they soon shake their heads in wonder and return to their personal business as the woman continues her daily trek through the city. *For those in the know, it isn't Korsch's bread that they are looking for each day. The woman is a dealer in illicit drugs, selling mood-altering mushrooms and spices to those who are addicted to her wares. Some on the city watch are well aware of her true activity; she pays them handsomely for their silence and, at times, protection from potential competitors.*



Within the pages of this slim,
blasphemous pamphlet you
will find 2d6 strangers who
reside in the city.

Whether they are friends or
foes remains to be seen.

Strange Citizens of the City is copyright © 2020 by Philip Reed.
The wonderful artwork used in this book is © Barandash Karandashich,
under license from Shutterstock.com

Strange Citizens of the City is an independent production by Philip Reed and is not
affiliated with Ockult Örtmästare Games or Stockholm Kartell. It is published under
the MÖRK BORG Third Party License.
MÖRK BORG is copyright Ockult Örtmästare Games and Stockholm Kartell.

**hjo agn jo
suaznls abueas**